


# Fort Collins Police Services Policy Manual

 <b>FORT COLLINS POLICE</b>	<b>POLICY</b>	<b>318</b>
	<b>TITLE</b>	Canine Program

## **318.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The canine program was established to augment law enforcement services to the community. Highly skilled and trained teams of handlers and canines are used to supplement law enforcement operations to locate individuals, apprehend criminal offenders, and to locate explosives or other contraband.

## **318.2 GUIDELINES FOR USE OF PATROL CANINES**

- (a) A canine may be used in the investigation of a crime or possible crime, in the execution of a warrant, and to locate and apprehend a suspect if the handler reasonably believes that the individual has either committed or threatened to commit any serious offense and if any of the following conditions exist:
  - 1. There is a reasonable belief the individual poses an imminent threat of violence or serious harm to the public, any officer or the handler;
  - 2. The individual is physically resisting or threatening to resist arrest and the use of a canine reasonably appears to be necessary to overcome such resistance; or
  - 3. The individual is believed to be concealed in an area where entry by other than the canine would pose a threat to the safety of officers or the public.
- (b) It is recognized that situations may arise that do not fall within the provisions set forth in this policy. In any such case, a standard of objective reasonableness shall be used to review the decision to use a canine in view of the totality of the circumstances.
- (c) Absent a reasonable belief that an individual has committed or threatened to commit a serious offense, mere flight from a pursuing officer shall not serve as good cause for the use of a canine to apprehend an individual.

### **318.2.1 PREPARATIONS FOR UTILIZING A PATROL CANINE**

- (a) Prior to the use of a canine to search for or apprehend any individual, the canine handler and/or the supervisor on scene shall carefully consider all pertinent information reasonably available at the time. The information should include, but is not limited to:
  - 1. The individual's perceived age.
  - 2. The nature of the suspected offense.
  - 3. Any potential danger to the public and/or other officers at the scene if the canine is released.
  - 4. Any unnecessary risk to the safety of the canine.
  - 5. The degree of resistance or threatened resistance the subject has shown.
  - 6. The potential for escape or flight if the canine is not utilized.
  - 7. The potential for injury to officers or the public if the canine is not utilized.

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- (b) As circumstances permit, the canine handler should make every reasonable effort to communicate and coordinate with other involved personnel to minimize the risk of unintended injury.
- (c) The canine handler will evaluate the situation and determine if the use of a canine is appropriate. The handler shall have the ultimate authority not to deploy the canine.
- (d) Generally, the decision to deploy the canine shall remain with the handler. However, a supervisor sufficiently apprised of the situation may override the handler's decision to deploy.

#### 318.2.2 WARNINGS GIVEN TO ANNOUNCE THE USE OF A PATROL CANINE

Unless it would otherwise increase the risk of escape or injury to officers, a clearly audible warning that a canine will be released if the person does not comply should be made prior to deployment of the canine.

- (a) Warnings should contain the following information:
  - 1. Announcement of authority;
  - 2. Direction to the individual to comply; and
  - 3. Consequences for failing to comply.
- (b) In the event of an apprehension, the handler shall document in a police report whether a verbal warning was given and, if none was given, the reasons why.

#### 318.2.3 USE OF NARCOTIC DETECTION CANINES

A narcotic detection trained canine may be used in accordance with current law under the following circumstances:

- (a) To assist in the search for narcotics during a search warrant service.
- (b) To obtain a search warrant by using the detection canine in support of probable cause.
- (c) To search vehicles, buildings, bags, and any other articles as deemed necessary.
- (d) A canine will not be used to search a person for narcotics.

#### 318.2.4 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE TRAINING AIDS

The Canine Team Leader will coordinate with the Evidence Unit to identify, procure, issue, replenish, rotate, and return for final destruction, per Evidence Unit procedures, any drug evidence useful for canine training purposes.

- (a) Individual canine handlers will be issued and personally sign for controlled substance training aids for training use from the Evidence Unit and shall be responsible for the training aids they are assigned until such time as the training aid is returned to the control of the Property/Evidence Unit.
- (b) All controlled substance training samples will be stored in airtight and watertight cases at all times, except during training. The cases shall be secured in the locked vault of the canine handler's assigned patrol vehicle or stored in a locked evidence locker. The canine handler who signed for controlled substances training aids shall maintain positive control over access to these training aids at all times. Keys or combinations to storage cases or vaults in which controlled substance training aids are stored shall remain in the handler's possession at all times.

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- (c) The Canine Team Leader and Canine Lieutenant shall be notified immediately of any damaged or lost controlled substance training samples.
- (d) All duly certified officers acting in the performance of their official duties and any person working under their immediate direction, supervision, or instruction have immunity under state law while providing substance abuse training or canine drug detection training.

### 318.2.5 USE OF EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINES

Explosives detection trained canines may be used in accordance with current law to aid in the detection, deterrence, mitigation, and immediate response to explosives threats.

- (a) Explosives detection canines will be single purpose canines and can be used to search the following:
  1. Buildings
  2. Luggage, parcels, or other objects
  3. Vehicles as well as other modes of transportation
  4. Open areas
  5. Individual persons or crowds (Vapor Wake detection)
- (b) Deployment of an explosives detection canine team requires different levels of support. Officers assigned to support an explosives detection canine team will receive additional training and will be referred to as the Handler Support Team (HST). The deployment support levels are as follows:
  1. Level One – Static object searches or area clearance where there is no elevated threat level and a low security risk. No Vapor Wake detection of persons. Level one deployments do not require HST assistance.
  2. Level Two – Static object searches or area clearance with an increased threat level or security risk. Vapor Wake detection of crowds less than 2,000 people. Level two deployments require one HST officer who is another canine handler.
  3. Level Three – Static object searches or area clearance with a high threat level or security risk. Vapor Wake detection of crowds exceeding 2,000 people. Level three deployments require a two officer HST consisting of one additional canine handler and a trained HST officer.
- (c) Utilization of an explosives detection canine will be conducted in a manner to attain the highest level of proficiency of detection for each deployment. The canine handler will evaluate the area and known information prior to deployment. The canine handler will make the decision on the best manner to effectively deploy the canine. Having the most knowledge of the canine's abilities and limitations, the canine handler has ultimate authority not to deploy the canine.
- (d) If the canine handler has reason to believe that an explosive device exists within the search area (i.e., any object or package that is unusual or out of place for that environment, visible wires, timing mechanism, pipes, etc.) the canine will not be utilized and a bomb technician will be immediately notified.

### 318.2.6 USE OF EXPLOSIVES TRAINING AIDS

In accordance with current law and regulation, the Canine Team Leader will identify, procure, issue, replenish, and rotate explosive odors useful for canine training purposes.

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- (a) Both real and pseudo explosives training aids will be utilized in training sessions.
- (b) Explosives training aids will be stored at the police department within proper secure storage and will have limited access.
- (c) An inventory log will be maintained with the explosives training aids and will record the date, time, type of explosive, weight, reason for use, and name of the individual taking custody of and returning the explosive training aids.
- (d) Explosives training aids will be packaged in airtight and watertight cases at all times except during training exercises.
- (e) During training, the canine handler will take all precautions to prevent the loss, damage, or tampering of the explosives.
- (f) At the conclusion of training, a complete inventory of all utilized explosives training aids will be conducted prior to departure from the training area.
- (g) The Canine Team Leader shall be notified immediately of any damaged or lost explosives training aids.
- (h) New explosives training aids will be procured every two years. Expiring training aids will be provided to the Bomb Squad for proper destruction.

#### 318.2.7 GUIDELINES FOR NON-APPREHENSION USE

Because canines have senses far superior to those of humans, they may be effectively used to track or search for non-criminals (e.g. lost children or individuals who may be disoriented or in need of medical attention). In such circumstances, it will be necessary for the handler to evaluate the conditions and the ability of the canine to determine the feasibility of such an application.

- (a) Absent a change in circumstances that present an imminent threat to officers, the canine, or the public, such applications should be conducted on-leash or under conditions that minimize the risk of the canine biting or otherwise injuring the individual, if located.
- (b) Searches for lost children may be conducted only after obtaining consent from a parent or guardian.

#### 318.2.8 REPORTING CANINE USE, BITES, AND INJURIES

- (a) Whenever the canine is deployed, a Canine Deployment Report shall be completed by the handler. If the canine had significant action during the deployment (e.g. located evidence, a suspect, or made a criminal apprehension) a police report shall also be completed.
  1. Whenever a canine bites or causes any injury to an individual, whether on or off-duty, the handler shall immediately notify the Canine Team Leader and Canine Lieutenant
  2. Color photographs shall be taken of the bite or injury.
  3. The injured party should be transported to an appropriate medical facility if the injury requires medical attention beyond first aid. If the injured party is in custody, an officer should remain with the suspect until treatment has been rendered.
  4. If a subject alleges an injury that is not visible, the location of the alleged injury should be photographed.
  5. Canines controlled by peace officers are exempt from regulatory action enforced by the Larimer County Humane Society relating to canine bites and leash laws.
- (b) Canine applications shall be considered a Type 2 Use of Force as described in Policy 301, Response to Resistance Reporting and Review, when the canine bites or injures a suspect

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after being released upon the suspect. Required reporting and review of canine applications will be consistent with Policy 301.

- (c) Any unintended bite or injury caused by the canine during deployments, operations, training, presentations, or under any other circumstances, either on or off-duty, shall be reported promptly to the Canine Team Leader. Unintended bites or injuries caused by the canine should be documented in an administrative report and shall not require a Use of Force Board review.

### 318.2.9 REPORTING CANINE INJURIES

In the event that a canine is injured, the handler shall notify the Canine Team Leader as soon as practicable.

- (a) Medical care for any injured canine shall follow the protocol established in this policy.
- (b) The handler will document the injury in a Canine Deployment Report.

### 318.2.10 ASSIGNMENT OF CANINES

Patrol canines shall be assigned to the Special Operations Division (SOD) to supplement and assist Agency officers. Detection only canines (narcotics and explosives) may be assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division or SOD.

## 318.3 REQUEST FOR USE OF CANINE TEAMS

Agency personnel are encouraged to request the use of the on-duty canines. Requests for off-duty canine teams may be granted by an on-duty supervisor.

### 318.3.1 REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER AGENCIES

The Canine Lieutenant or Canine Team Leader must approve all requests for on or off-duty canine assistance from outside agencies. If neither is available, requests may be granted by an on-duty supervisor subject to the following provisions:

- (a) Canine teams shall not be used for any assignment that is not consistent with this policy.
- (b) The handler has the ultimate authority to decide whether the canine is to be used for a specific assignment.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of the canine handler to coordinate with outside department personnel in order to minimize the risk of unintended injury.
- (d) Outside agency requests for an explosive detection canine team consisting of a level two or level three deployment will require support of an additional canine handler trained as an HST officer. Additional needed support officers can be provided by the requesting agency.

### 318.3.2 REQUEST FOR PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS

All public requests for canine demonstration shall be approved by the Canine Lieutenant or Canine Team Leader prior to making any commitment. Only trained decoys shall be used to demonstrate apprehension work.

## 318.4 SELECTION, REQUIREMENTS, AND REMOVAL OF UNIT

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- (a) Canine Unit openings will be authorized and filled subject to the approval of the SOD Assistant Chief. During a selection process, interested police officers, with at least two years of service in the Agency, shall be evaluated by the following criteria:
  - 1. Recognized competence ability as evidenced by performance;
  - 2. Special skills or training as they pertain to the assignment;
  - 3. Ability to meet or exceed the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile rating in each segment of the Agency physical fitness test;
  - 4. Willingness to perform duties using a canine partner for the working life of the canine; and
  - 5. Officers who accept assignments as canine handlers are not eligible for transfer or promotion during the first four years of their canine assignment.
- (b) Canine handlers and decoys shall participate in the Agency physical fitness test twice a year. Team members must meet or exceed the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in each segment of the test. Failure of any phase of the testing will result in remedial training with an Agency fitness instructor and a retest of all segments to be completed within 30 days. Failure to comply within the thirty-day period shall result in a suspension from the team and possible removal. Team members unable to test due to injury or illness must provide documentation from a doctor indicating the nature of injury and applicable work restrictions. Following a release from a doctor, the team member will have no more than 60 days to complete the testing.
- (c) Canine handlers or decoys may be suspended or removed from the Canine Unit at any time, without advanced notice, with or without cause by the Canine Lieutenant or SOD Assistant Chief.
  - 1. A canine handler shall have no property right to the canine duty assignment.
- (d) Upon retirement of a canine, the Canine Team Leader shall evaluate the performance of the handler and make a recommendation to the Canine Lieutenant to retain or remove the handler from the Canine Unit. The SOD Assistant Chief will have final approval authority regarding the recommendation.

### **318.5 CANINE HANDLER RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **318.5.1 CARE FOR THE CANINE AND EQUIPMENT**

The handler shall ultimately be responsible for the health and welfare of the canine and shall ensure that the canine receives proper nutrition, grooming, training, medical care, affection, and living conditions. The handler will be responsible for the following:

- (a) Unless required by a particular application, the handler shall not expose the canine to any foreseeable and unreasonable risk of harm.
- (b) Only Agency approved food shall be fed to the canine. The Agency will provide the food for the canine.
- (c) Only Agency approved equipment shall be used in the handling and care of the canine.
- (d) When off-duty, canines shall be maintained in kennels at the homes of their handlers. Only Agency approved kennels with six-foot walls, or a fixed roof, shall be used to secure the canine. If a satisfactory kennel is not readily available, the Agency will provide one.
- (e) For an added level of security for the canine and the public, the canine kennel shall be located within a fenced area or yard designed to limit outside access.

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- (f) Handlers shall permit the Canine Team Leader or Canine Lieutenant to evaluate the canine kennel at the handler's residence, as well as the canine patrol vehicle, to verify that conditions and equipment conform to this policy.
- (g) Any changes in the living status of the handler that may affect the lodging or environment of the canine shall be reported to the Canine Team Leader as soon as possible.
- (h) Under no circumstances will the canine be lodged at any other location unless approved by the Canine Team Leader in advance.
- (i) Whenever a canine handler takes a vacation or an extended number of days off, the canine shall only be lodged at an Agency-approved location.
- (j) When off-duty, handlers shall not involve their canines in any activity that would put the canine or an individual at unreasonable risk of injury.
- (k) Canines may not be bred or used for breeding without authorization from the assistant chief of the division to which the canine is assigned.

#### 318.5.2 CANINES IN PUBLIC AREAS

All canines shall be kept on a leash when in areas that allow access to the public. Exceptions to this rule would include specific law enforcement operations for which the canines are trained.

- (a) Canines shall not be left unattended in any area to which the public may have access.
- (b) When the canine patrol vehicle is left unattended, all windows and doors shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent unauthorized access to the canine. The handler shall also ensure that the unattended canine patrol vehicle remains inhabitable for the canine and the canine heat protection system in the vehicle is activated.
- (c) Only FCPS canine handlers or trained canine decoys are authorized to be in control of a FCPS canine in public.

#### 318.5.3 HANDLER COMPENSATION

The canine handler shall be compensated for time spent in the care, feeding, grooming, and other needs of the canine in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. The compensation shall be prescribed in the employee's collective bargaining agreement.

### 318.6 MEDICAL CARE OF THE CANINE

All medical attention shall be rendered by the Agency designated canine veterinarian, except during an emergency or if a specialist is required.

#### 318.6.1 NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Non-emergency medical concerns requiring veterinarian care will be scheduled by the handler with the Agency designated veterinarian. Any indication that a canine is not in good physical condition shall be reported to the Canine Team Leader as soon as practicable.

- (a) All records of medical treatment shall be provided to the Canine Team Leader and maintained with the Canine Unit.

#### 318.6.2 EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

The handler shall notify the Canine Team Leader and Canine Lieutenant as soon as possible when emergency medical care for the canine is required. Depending on the severity of the

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illness or injury, the canine shall either be treated by the designated veterinarian or transported to a designated emergency medical facility for treatment. If the handler and canine are out of the area, the handler may use the nearest available veterinarian.

### **318.7 SELECTION AND TRAINING OF CANINES**

Canines will be selected and evaluated based on the standards outlined in the K9 Selection Testing. Once a canine has been selected and before assignment in the field, each canine team shall be trained and certified to meet current recognized national standards or Agency-approved certification standards. Cross-trained canine teams or those canine teams trained exclusively for the detection of narcotics or explosives shall be trained and certified to meet a nationally-recognized standard or the Agency-approved certification standards established for such detection canines. Canine teams may not be used outside the scope of their certification.

#### **318.7.1 CONTINUED TRAINING**

Each canine team shall receive a minimum of 300 hours of annual training. Each canine team shall be recertified to a current nationally-recognized standard or the Agency-approved certification standards on an annual basis. Each detector canine team shall be recertified on an annual basis. Additional training considerations are as follows.

- (a) Canine handlers are encouraged to engage in additional training with approval of the Canine Team Leader.
- (b) To ensure that all training is consistent, no handler, trainer, or outside vendor is authorized to train to a standard that is not reviewed and approved by the Agency.

#### **318.7.2 FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE TRAINING**

Any canine team failing to graduate or obtain certification shall not be deployed in the field for tasks the team is not certified to perform until graduation or certification standards are achieved. Any canine team failing to certify will receive remedial training to correct any performance issues. Handlers or canines that fail to respond to remedial training efforts may be subject to removal from the Canine Unit.

#### **318.7.3 TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENT RECORDS**

All canine training and deployment records shall be maintained by the Canine Unit.

### **318.8 EQUIPMENT**

Canine handlers will be issued the following equipment. Additions/substitutions/changes in equipment type or quantity are subject to approval by the Canine Team Leader and Canine Lieutenant.

- (a) Travel crate
- (b) Outdoor home kennel
- (c) Food and water bowls
- (d) Brushes
- (e) Nail clippers
- (f) Dental care kit
- (g) K9 first aid kit

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- (h) Collars (leather, choke, and pinch)
- (i) E-collar with remote
- (j) Leashes (6', 15', and 30')
- (k) Tracking harness
- (l) K9 patrol harness
- (m) K9 ballistic vest
- (n) Bite sleeve
- (o) Agitation muzzle
- (p) Soft muzzle
- (q) K9 training uniforms (2 short sleeve, 2 long sleeve, 2 pairs of pants)
- (r) K9 call out/demo uniforms (2 short sleeve, 1 long sleeve, 2 pairs of pants)
- (s) Light-weight training uniform pullover
- (t) Cold weather training uniform coat
- (u) Training uniform boots
- (v) Callout vest carrier
- (w) K9 uniform pin
- (x) Badge for K9

### **318.9 CANINE TEAM LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Canine Team Leader shall be appointed by the Canine Lieutenant and shall coordinate the canine program. The Canine Team Leader is directly responsible to the Canine Lieutenant. The Canine Team Leader shall be responsible for, but not limited to:

- (a) Reviewing all canine deployment reports to ensure compliance with this policy and to identify training issues and other needs of the canine program.
- (b) Maintaining liaison with other department canine coordinators.
- (c) Maintaining liaison with the vendor kennel.
- (d) Maintaining accurate records to document canine activities.
- (e) Recommending and overseeing the procurement of needed equipment and services for the canine unit.
- (f) Coordinating canine training and for scheduling all canine related activities.
- (g) Ensuring the canine teams are scheduled for continuous training to maximize the capabilities of the teams.
- (h) Scheduling periodic training for all Agency personnel in order to familiarize them with how to conduct themselves in the presence of canines.
- (i) Evaluating canine team performance and providing recommendations on program development to the Canine Lieutenant and SOD Assistant Chief.
- (j) Preparation and administration of the approved canine unit budget.

### **318.10 CONDUCT OF AGENCY PERSONNEL**

Other Agency personnel working in conjunction with or near a canine are expected to:

- (a) Follow the direction of the handler when a canine team is involved in a specific incident and it is necessary for the handler to direct officers in a tactical situation.
- (b) Except in emergency situations, personnel other than the handler shall not give commands to a canine.

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- (c) Canines shall not be teased or harassed.
- (d) Individuals may pet a canine only with the permission and in the presence of the handler.

#### 318.11 CARE AND USE OF CANINE VEHICLE

The Agency will provide a specially equipped vehicle for each canine team.

- (a) The canine vehicle will be equipped as a standard marked patrol vehicle but will be modified as follows:
  - 1. It will have a section in the rear passenger area designed to safely transport the canine.
  - 2. The rear windows will be covered with a mess screen to prevent any person from gaining access to the canine with their fingers.
  - 3. All rear windows will be tinted to provide the canine protection from the heat.
  - 4. It will be fitted with a canine heat protection system which monitors the temperature inside the vehicle.
  - 5. It will have decals identifying it as a "K-9 Unit" in order to notify persons to keep away.
- (b) The canine vehicle will not be used by any other Agency members unless approved by the canine supervisor.
- (c) Except in the case of an emergency, at no time will anyone gain access to the canine vehicle or remove any equipment from the vehicle without the handler's approval.
- (d) The canine handler is responsible for ensuring their vehicle is kept clean and properly maintained.